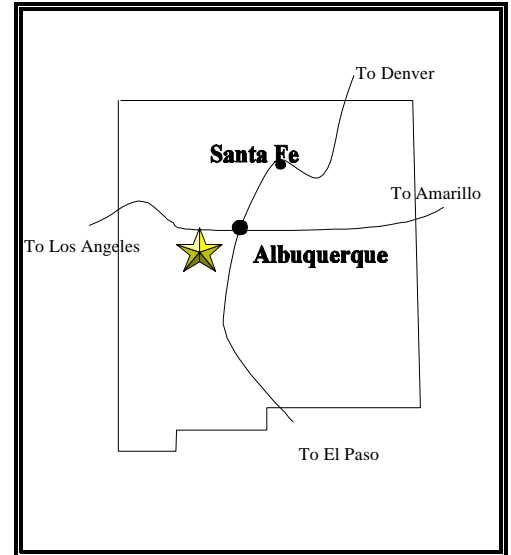


Pueblo of Acoma Solid Waste Program



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Location: 55 miles west of Albuquerque, south of I-40
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History: The *peñol* and Sky City are believed to be the oldest inhabited sites in the United States. Fray Marcos de Niza reported on the village in 1539 and the next year Francisco de Coronado and his army visited the site. Following the visits, the Spanish believed there were 5,000 to 10,000 warlike people living on vast tracks of land in the area earning the Pueblo the title "Kingdom of Acu". In 1598, Juan de Zaldivar's soldiers tried to steal grain from Acoma's storehouse. Acoma resisted, killing Zaldivar and 12 of his men. In retaliation Conquistador Juan de Onate sent 70 men to battle the Acoma, leaving 600 Acomas dead. Several hundred others were taken from their village. Using all the non-violent, legal means at their disposal, the Acoma have actively pursued restoring their original lands - some 1.5 million acres in total. Acoma officials petitioned the Court of Claims in the 1890s, the Pueblo Lands Board in 1924, and finally the Indian Claims Commission in 1948. Thirteen years later, the Commission declared the Acoma had aboriginal title to the land and granted a monetary settlement. Since then the Acoma have purchased large areas of land adjacent to the reservation. Through this process their land base has slowly grown to its present size.

Solid Waste: There are eight open dumps and three land fills which may qualify for investigation under Superfund. 1999 *Pueblo of Acoma Environmental Needs Assessment*. A transfer station has been constructed. EPA will be working with the Pueblo, POEP, IHS, and BIA to close the open dumps and ensure that alternative solid waste disposal systems are in place. A closure plan has been submitted to EPA is being reviewed.